

**For Immediate Release:** February 12, 2009

Washington D.C. – U.S. Congressman Duncan Hunter (R-CA), a member of the House Education and Labor Committee and House Committee on Armed Services, today introduced the Fairness for Military Recruiters Act.

The legislation clarifies and strengthens existing law, ensuring that military recruiters are provided the same access to high schools and basic student contact information that is provided to colleges, universities and other recruiters.

"Our national security and the future success of our military hinges on the willingness of patriotic and talented young Americans to serve in our nation's armed forces," said Congressman Hunter. "At the same time, military service offers quality education and career opportunities, and students should be familiar with these benefits as they consider their options for the future."

"The Fairness for Military Recruiters Act ensures military recruiters continue to have access to high school campuses and student directories, and puts the decision to withhold contact information squarely in the hands of parents. This legislation presents a balanced, straight forward approach to ensuring that students are not denied the opportunity to explore the benefits of military service," concluded Hunter.

"America's military community protects our freedoms at home and abroad. They also offer meaningful educational and employment opportunities for America's youth, and they deserve the same respect afforded to every other recruiter invited into America's high schools," said Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA), the top Republican on the House Education Committee. "I commend Representative Hunter for proposing this common sense legislation to ensure America's military is not discriminated against in our nation's classrooms."

While current law, enacted under the No Child Left Behind Act, provides parents and students the right to request that contact information be withheld, some school boards and anti-military activists have attempted to limit and creatively interpret the provision as a way of denying recruiter access.

Specifically, the Fairness for Military Recruiters Act:

- Ensures that military recruiters continue to have access to student information, similar to colleges, universities and other organizations recruiting students;
- Places decisions regarding a student's personal information and future career opportunities firmly in control of his or her parents, unless a student is 18 years of age;

- makes clear that no process other than that of a written parental request shall be used to authorize the withholding of basic student contact information;
- Prevents the implementation of an "opt-in" process, whereby all student information would be withheld from military recruiters unless parents send in an authorization form.

The Fairness for Military Recruiters Act was introduced with 35 cosponsors. Congressional Democrats are expected to soon introduce legislation requiring parents to "opt-in" before contact information can be released, making it far less likely that students and families will receive information about the opportunities available to them in the military.